

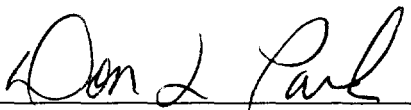
Indiana Gamma: The History of the Sigma Phi Epsilon  
Fraternity at Ball State University

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Don L. Park", is written over a horizontal line.

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### Purpose of Thesis

This thesis will trace the history of the Indiana Gamma Chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon at Ball State University, from its creation as the Zeta Chi local fraternity, to its affiliation and disaffiliation with the Phi Delta Pi national fraternity, and to its affiliation with the Sigma Phi Epsilon national fraternity. A discussion of life within the fraternity, and how it has changed throughout the years, will also take place. The paper will conclude with the events of 1992, in which the chapter was almost expelled from Ball State University, and what the chapter has done to improve its programs and membership in recent years.

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## Foreword

By Frank M. Hancock

Indiana Gamma Chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon is and always will be a very special place to me. From the first day I walked into the house and began the ritual of rush, throughout the next four years of college life as a young adult and until this very day, being a Sig Ep is one of my life's great joys.

As a pledge in the fall of 1967, I was unsure just what I had joined, this fraternity of fellow students. Over the next twelve weeks of pledging, I began to learn the meaning of brotherhood and fellowship. It isn't just words, but true feelings of love and friendship of men whom I learned to call brothers.

As a member of this fraternity during a time of national change and turmoil, the Riverside House was my home and haven for all of the good times one should have while a student in college. It also was a place to learn and respect the heritage of our chapter and abide by our oath as fraternity members.

As an undergraduate member of Sigma Phi Epsilon, I learned about life and other people by sharing a relationship and home with so many different people from so many different backgrounds. Since its beginnings, Sigma Phi Epsilon at Ball State has been made up of brothers from all over America. That diversity is what has made us so strong as a fraternity. We've had scholars, athletes, coaches, alumni mentors and just plain hard working men

whom all have worked together for one common cause, Sig Ep. Maybe we all didn't always see eye to eye, but we all pulled together for the fraternity. Spring Sing, Homecoming, intramurals and just having fun was always "one for all and all for one".

It's very hard to put into words the times we shared, the brotherhood we enjoyed in the foreword of a thesis. What the founding brothers experienced in starting Zeta Chi, Phi Delta Phi and finally affiliating with Sigma Phi Epsilon in the 50's, through the difficult 60's, the changing 70's, the problems of the 80's and rebirth of the chapter in the 90's is a history of what we all are a part of. As brothers, our personal experiences as Sig Eps will be in many of our thoughts for the rest of our lives. Our fraternity, brotherhood and what it means cannot be easily explained, but it's real and special to all who have shared the golden heart of our fraternity.

Brian Hancock elected to write about the history of Sigma Phi Epsilon for his thesis. As a member of the first pledge class following the near expulsion of the fraternity in the fall of 1992, he has witnessed the rebirth of the fraternity from the depths of despair to its new found respect and leadership on campus. The fraternity and membership is now as strong as ever, with over one hundred brothers with the ideals and objectives of its founders having been rekindled. The alumni and undergraduates are again proud to be a Sig Ep and share in its success and rebirth. To the undergraduate members and that special group of involved alumni whom have made the difference, I

say thanks for all of your hard work in returning our chapter to the top.

To Brian, I say thanks for retracing our chapters history and making it available to our current and future brothers. On a personal note, I am very happy and proud you were able to have and learn the meaning of brotherhood. I know you will cherish your memories as a Sig Ep and hopefully some day share them with your son as I have had the pleasure in sharing my memories with you and your brother Kevin.

Love, Dad

## INTRODUCTION

It is easy to become confused reading or hearing about the activities of a Greek letter organization, especially if you have never been a part of social sorority or fraternity. One may know that a "pledge" is a perspective member of a fraternity or a sorority. However, one may not understand that when a fraternity man "pins" his girlfriend, he is not physically assaulting her, but giving her his fraternity pin to proclaim his love to her in the presence of his fraternity brothers.

Many people may not realize how structured a Greek organization really is. Besides having an executive board of undergraduate members running the activities of the fraternity, each chapter has their national fraternity headquarters, the Interfraternity Council (I.F.C.), faculty and chapter counselors, and an alumni board, all of which have some say in how a chapter conducts its business and its behavior. In order to better understand the Indiana Gamma Chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, one needs to have a general knowledge of the fraternity's terminology, as well as the structure of the entire organization.

The period of time when a man is introduced to the fraternity system, the various chapters on the campus, and their members is called rush. At Ball State University, fraternity rush takes place near the beginning of each semester, and usually lasts about one to one and a half weeks. Rush is characterized by numerous organized events that provide for interaction between the rushees (perspective new members) and the members of the

fraternity that the rushee is visiting. These events could be as simple as watching an Indiana Pacer game on the television and eating pizza, or as elaborate as taking all the rushees to Indianapolis to watch the game in person.

During rush, rushees try to decide whether or not they would like to pledge, and which fraternity they would like to join. Since rush is a two-sided process, the members of the fraternity try to decide which rushees they would like to invite to join their organization. When the fraternity decides to ask a rushee to join, they extend him a "bid" to the chapter. A rushee has until the end of rush to decide whether or not he would like to accept or decline the bid. The end of rush is signified by the "Pinning Night", or pledge ceremony, where each new member is given a pin denoting his membership to the fraternity as a new member.

The first thing to know about a Greek letter organization is how the members refer to themselves. Many fraternities and sororities often refer to the organization's trademarked nickname. Many people are confused by the use of the Greek alphabet in differentiating between various fraternities and sororities. When someone says, "Are you a Sig Ep?" they are asking if you belong to Sigma Phi Epsilon, not Sigma Alpha Epsilon, which is often referred to as "SAE". Sometimes even knowing the Greek alphabet is not enough. Upon seeing a fraternity man wearing a sweatshirt that said "FIJI" or "Pike", many will not acknowledge the fact that the person is a member of Phi Gamma Delta or Pi Kappa Alpha.



Fraternity men also distinguish themselves by the status they hold within the organization. The members of a fraternity can be divided into the three most well known categories in the fraternity system: pledge, active, and alumnus. A pledge is a new member that commits himself to joining a particular fraternity after the period of rush. A man is considered a pledge anywhere from two to twenty weeks depending on the pledgeship system established by the local chapter and national fraternity. After pledgeship, many fraternities have a brief neophyte stage before allowing the new member to participate in the initiation ceremony. From that point on, that member is considered "active", gaining full rights and responsibilities within the chapter. The third category is that of alumnus. Alumnus status is obtained by graduating from the university, or in some instances when a brother has to leave or quit school, but is in good standing with the chapter.

The traditional pledge/active system no longer applies to the Indiana Gamma chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon because of the implementation of the Balanced Man Project. Pledgeship was eliminated in 1995 and new members proceed through four separate stages that last their entire college career. These stages are the Sigma, Phi, Epsilon, and Brother Mentor challenges. Each stage presents challenges that apply directly to each member's status at the university. For example, a member of the Sigma challenge would be required to become oriented to the fraternity, while a member of the Brother Mentor challenge would be required to complete a resume. (Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, Inc. 1994,

pg G9) This new system will be discussed in its entirety later on in this paper.

The organization of the Sigma Phi Epsilon chapter is a very complex system. It is also a system that is always changing to run more efficiently. The executive board of the undergraduate chapter has recently been reorganized by the national headquarters in order for the chapter to carry out its operations more smoothly. There are six executive positions which include: President, Vice-President of Programming, Vice-President of Finance, Vice-President of Recruitment, Vice-President of Membership Development, and Chaplin. There are many committees set up under each executive officer to aid in chapter operations. One of the committees chaired by the chaplin is the standards board which acts to enforce the rules and bylaws of the chapter.

Each fraternity and sorority on the campus is governed by either the National Panhellenic Council, the Panhellenic Council, or the Interfraternity Council. Each chapter has a representative on their respective councils, and all the council executive positions are held by undergraduate students. Each council is set up to establish policies for the operations of the various Greek groups on campus. They organize rush, intramural sports, and Greek sponsored events. They act as a mediator between the Greek system as a whole and other campus organizations, as well as the university administration. These councils are also in charge of monitoring Greek social activities through Social Evaluation Teams (SET) which report any infractions of university policy and the specific policy dictated

by the individual councils. These councils are also charged with promoting the Greek system to non-Greek students, faculty, administration, and the local community. (Tebo 1996)

The most influential group on the workings of the undergraduate chapter is the alumni board. This board is made up of concerned alumni who volunteer to continue their participation with the chapter after they graduate. The positions on this corporate board are: President, Vice-President, Controller, and Secretary (See Appendix H). The alumni board's biggest responsibility is the ownership and maintenance of the chapter house. The Alumni Corporation owns the property and leases it to the undergraduate chapter. They also control house improvements, such as repaving a parking lot or buying a new microwave. They also act as a middle man between the undergrads and the university and the national fraternity. If a problem arises that the undergrads cannot solve alone, the alumni board is the first group to step in and provide assistance. In addition to business matters, the alumni board also keeps alumni informed about the chapter by mailing a newsletter four times a year and planning Homecoming and other alumni activities. (Van Treeese 1996)

To assist the undergraduate chapter, the fraternity has a chapter counselor and a faculty advisor. The chapter counselor is usually an alum who lives within the vicinity of the campus so that he may answer questions and provide assistance to the chapter. The faculty advisor can be anyone working for the university that is willing to give his/her time in the same manner as the chapter counselor. The difference between these

two positions is the faculty advisor's ability to relate the university's stance on chapter operations. (Harris, R. 1996)

The undergraduate chapter also receives assistance from the Sigma Phi Epsilon national fraternity's resident scholar program. A resident scholar is a graduate student who is employed by the national fraternity to live in the chapter house as a peer advisor. The resident scholar helps the chapter maintain its high academic standards and suggests ways to improve the chapter's internal operations. Since 1992, the resident scholar program at Indiana Gamma has helped improve the chapter's scholarship program, which in turn, has raised the chapter's grade point average above the all-campus average, ranking it among the top fraternities. (McQuinn 1996)

The national fraternity headquarters, located in Richmond, Virginia, also spends a great deal of time encouraging the chapter to be the best that it can be. Probably the most important aspect of the Sig Ep national organization is the traveling regional directors. Sigma Phi Epsilon has the largest staff of regional directors among the national fraternities. They travel throughout the country visiting the individual chapters at least twice a school year. The directors evaluate chapter programs and operations and make suggestions for improvement.

The national fraternity provides its chapters resources and connections that being a local fraternity (one that is not affiliated with any one of the national fraternities) does not have available. Sigma Phi Epsilon holds regional leadership

academies every year. At these academies, undergrads and alumni attend workshops to help develop their skills as leaders within the chapter, as well as learning from the experiences of members of other chapters within the region. Sigma Phi Epsilon also has a national Conclave that convenes every two years. At these conventions the national bylaws and aspects of the ritual of Sigma Phi Epsilon are discussed and debated. Each chapter elects two delegates to attend these meetings, thereby giving each chapter a say in the national fraternity's operations. There are also many workshops set up, similar to the regional academies. (Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, Inc. 1991, pg 112-118)

With this brief overview of Greek letter organizations, with the specific focus on Sigma Phi Epsilon, it will be easier to understand how problems arise and are solved within the fraternity. However, it is not the structure of the organization that attracts people to join, nor the prospects of building ones resume by taking on leadership roles within the organization, but the friendships that are created and developed by participating in the activities and programs of the fraternity. Many alumni from this chapter will state if they had not joined a the Indiana Gamma chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity they would have missed many of the memories and experiences they consider important during their college career and to future successes.

## THE NATIONAL FRATERNITY: SIGMA PHI EPSILON

The similarities between the founding of Sigma Phi Epsilon in Richmond, Virginia and the founding of Zeta Chi in Muncie, Indiana are strikingly similar. Both fraternities were founded by men who were not satisfied with the current greek system and decided to form their own organization. What follows is a brief look at how the Sigma Phi Epsilon national fraternity was founded, so one can understand the prestige and resources a national fraternity gives to a local group of young men.

When Carter Jenkins, a member of the Chi Phi Fraternity at Rutgers University, transferred to Richmond College in the fall of 1900, he wanted to continue his fraternal experience at his new school with a group of close friends like he had at Rutgers. He had become good friends with five schoolmates and talked them into applying to the Chi Phi national fraternity to start a chapter at Richmond College. The Chi Phi national fraternity turned down their request because they thought that Richmond College was too small (Richmond College had around 300 students) for another Greek organization.

Instead of becoming discouraged, the six men decided that they would just form their own fraternity. Since Jenkins was the only one in his group of friends that had ever been in a social fraternity, they relied heavily on him to help form the new organization. They soon met six more men who were searching for a group to which to belong, and who also felt that the campus and the current fraternity system did not appeal to them. These twelve men were: Carter Jenkins, Benjamin Gaw, William Wallace,

William Carter, Thomas Wright, William Phillips, Lucian Cox, Richard Owens, Edgar Allen, Robert McFarland, Frank Kerfoot, and Thomas McCaul. (Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity 1986 pg 8-9)

The twelve men met in the middle of October, in Benjamin Gaw's and William Wallace's room on the third floor of Ryland Hall in order to organize themselves into a fraternity. Jenkins decided that they should call themselves "Sigma Phi". The first printed roster of the twelve initiates was dated November 1, 1901, and thus is considered the day that the fraternity was founded.

During the process of applying to become a fraternity at Richmond College, the administration pointed out that there was a Sigma Phi Fraternity already established. Jenkins promised to add Epsilon to the end of their fraternity name, and rushed to William Carter's room to look up the meaning of Epsilon in his Greek-English Lexicon. As soon as they convinced themselves that the meaning of the letter was satisfactory, the men telegraphed their jeweler in North Carolina to add a Epsilon to the heart shaped badges that he was creating. (Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, Inc. 1986 10-11)

Even though seven of the twelve charter members were seniors, the fraternity continued to grow both at Richmond College and across other campuses as well. After pledging only one man during its second year of existence, the men of Sigma Phi Epsilon decided that they would have to become a national fraternity, or their beloved organization would perish. By its fifth year, Sigma Phi Epsilon had fourteen chapters in nine

states. (Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, Inc. 1986 pg 12-13) By its twenty-fifth year the fraternity had 66 chapters, and by its fiftieth, 124 chapters. This trend towards growth would eventually lead Sigma Phi Epsilon to establishing its 133rd chapter at Ball State Teachers College, where a group of young men were waiting for the right national fraternity with which to affiliate. (Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, Inc. 1991 pg 170-171)



## ZETA CHI AND PHI DELTA PI

In the fall of 1948, a group of men from North Hall on Ball State Teachers College campus were working together to get one of their friends, Dale Kendrick, and his slate elected to the student government. Of the five slates, Kendrick's "Schmoo" party was the only independent (non-greek) slate to be running for sophomore class officers. Kendrick and his friends painted the entire campus with Schmoos' signs to advertise his party, infuriating Dr. John Emens, president of Ball State University. (Kendrick 1996) To further promote themselves, Kendrick's slate held the "Schmoo Parade" which was the first ever political demonstration to be held on Ball State's campus. (Ball State News Oct. 8, 1948)

The party won the election, and through the election process, sixteen men became close friends. Most of these men lived in the North hall, a converted Navy barracks which had been moved to BSTC campus following World War II to provide housing for the large number of veterans returning from military service. (Park 1996) This was a diverse group of men that did not fit the mold of any other organization on campus. (Kendrick 1996) There was also a lot of hazing involved with joining any of the other fraternities, and according to Dan Mallas, "Since there were a lot of ex-GI's in our group and they did not want to put up with the idiotic stuff." (Mallas 1996) In the words of Bill Hofmann, "We thought that we could be Greek without beating people up." (Hofmann 1996)

The men decided to form their own local fraternity, so they submitted their request to the dean of boys, Dr. Kenneth Collier. Approval was easily obtained, so the men wrote a constitution and bylaws. (Mann 1996) They had decided to call themselves Zeta Chi, only later discovering that it might be the name of a women's honorary physical education sorority somewhere in New England. Bill Mathews states, "This didn't bother us because of our size, and because few others knew about this." (Mathews 1996)

The fraternity colors of blue and white were chosen, and Dale Kendrick, an art major, was charged with designing a pin and its symbolism. The pin was made with 18 K. gold, with three rubies, one for each faculty sponsor of the fraternity, and sixteen pearls for each of the founding members. There were only fifteen charter members (see Appendix C) because one of the men did not make it back to school the second semester. The sapphire in the center was for the color blue. The gold clasping hands in the upper left hand corner stood for friendship, and the lamp of learning was placed in the lower right hand corner. On the back of each pin were the owner's initials with the year 1949. (Kendrick 1996)

Even though they were not officially recognized by the college until November 8, 1948, Zeta Chi were already participating in campus events as a group. The biggest event on campus was the annual all-campus leaf rake. The college would divide the campus into sections for the students to rake the leaves. The members of Zeta Chi became known throughout campus

during this event when they had a leaf fight with the coeds. (Hofmann 1996) The campus provided apples for everyone to eat and an all-campus dance was held after the days events were completed. (Ball State News Nov. 5, 1948)

After they were recognized by the university, Zeta Chi participated in many other campus events. They sponsored their first all-campus dance on January 14, 1949 called the "Button and Bows" dance. (Ball State News Jan. 14, 1949 pg 3) During the Commerce Club Carnival, the men of Zeta Chi put together a human pinball machine, where fraternity members would stick their heads through a large cardboard pinball machine and a contestant would score points whenever his/her ball would bounce off of the heads. (Hofmann 1996) Probably the biggest achievement of this newly formed fraternity was going from last to first in the Spring Sing competition. According to Dale Kendrick:

"Our parents came miles for this event! Zeta Chi was last or near last on the program, and we were all outside in cold weather and drizzle. We came in and BOMBED with croaking voices. We were all OFF KEY, and the audience just loved it. Zeta Chi was mortified! We slunk out of the hall like drowned rats. At our next meeting we pledged "From Last to First" next year and I do believe we did just that." (Kendrick 1996)

After only a little more than a year of existence, the men of Zeta Chi began to set their sights on becoming affiliated with a national fraternity. Dr. John Emens, President of Ball State, was an alumnus from the Phi Delta Pi fraternity at Michigan Normal in Ypsilanti, Michigan. He was friends with Dale Kendrick and he wanted the Zeta Chi's to become part of his national

fraternity. (Kendrick 1996) Since only a couple of fraternities at Ball State were affiliated with a national fraternity, joining a national fraternity would give greater prestige to the men in Zeta Chi, and make them a more legitimate organization in the eyes of everyone in and around campus. (Hofmann 1996; Mathews 1996)

Phi Delta Pi had its beginnings in 1892 when a group of men at the Michigan Normal college founded the Washingtonian Toastmaster's Club. In 1899 the club was reorganized as a Greek letter organization. In 1901, the beta chapter was founded at Michigan Central in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, and in 1925, the gamma chapter was founded at Colorado State Teachers College in Greeley, Colorado. Phi Delta Pi had a close association with teacher's colleges, and was quite interested in making the Zeta Chi's into the Delta Chapter of Phi Delta Pi. (Mathews 1996)

Correspondence between the men of Zeta Chi and the Phi Delta Pi chapter at Ypsilanti began, and then a group of four Zeta Chi's went to Michigan Normal to become acquainted with the chapter. Once the members of Zeta Chi agreed to affiliate with the Phi Delta national fraternity and permission was granted by the administration, an initiation date for February 8, 1950 was set to install the delta chapter. (Hofmann 1996; Ball State Teachers College 1950, pg 226) Twenty Zeta Chi's were initiated into Phi Delta Pi (See Appendix D), and there was a rush for other fraternities at Ball State to "go national". (Yaney 1996)

In two short years, Phi Delta Pi grew to nearly 50 men and there was a great need to centralize the fraternities activities.

A change in Ball State's food service policy increased the desire for the men to find a house for the fraternity. Until the 1952-1953 school year, students living in Elliot Hall were given the option on whether or not they would like to eat in hall's cafeteria. That year they were not given that option, and the thought of eating cafeteria food increased the desire to obtain a house. (Nash 1996) After months of planning and negotiating, a lease was signed on December 2, 1952 for the house at 526 North Martin Avenue. Phi Delta Pi became the second Ball State fraternity, after Phi Sigma Epsilon, to obtain a fraternity house. (Stotts 1952, pg 1-2)

The house held twenty men who slept in the upstairs, and studied in study rooms on the ground floor. There was also a recreation room with a ping-pong table. (Stotts 1952, pg 1-2) The house was furnished with old bunk beds from Ball State and used furniture from many of the brothers' homes. It was much cheaper to live in the house than in the residence halls. The Phi Delts used the left over money to start a house fund. With this house fund, the members hoped to buy a house of their own. (Nash 1996)

During this same time period, the men of the Phi Delt chapter at Ball State Teachers College were becoming dissatisfied with the Phi Delta Pi national fraternity. Many of the other local fraternities on campus were affiliating with much larger national fraternities. Phi Delta Pi only had four chapters, one of which was inactive. (Nash 1996)

The fraternity voted to disaffiliate with the Phi Delt national fraternity in the spring of 1952, returning Phi Delta Pi at Ball State to a local fraternity status. This enabled the local chapter to open communications with many other national fraternities. (Stotts 1952, pg 1) Sigma Nu was the first national fraternity that the Phi Delts approached. Many of the members had friends in Sigma Nu, and the Sigma Nu national headquarters were located in Indianapolis. While examining whether or not to join Sigma Nu, it came to the Phi Delts' attention that an 80 year-old judge in Chicago, with the veto power to reject a new chapter, opposed the idea of having a Sigma Nu chapter at any teachers college. After encouragement from the Sigma Nu national office to wait a while before applying again, the Phi Delts decided to look elsewhere. (Nash 1996)

There used to be a Sigma Phi Epsilon colony on Ball State's campus, yet it could not gain enough members to sustain its existence. Some of those members had pledged Phi Delta Pi, so the decision was made to consider affiliating with the Sigma Phi Epsilon national fraternity. (Nash 1996) After a series of ballots, Sigma Phi Epsilon was the unanimous choice. (Stotts 1952, pg 1)

Communications between the local Phi Delt chapter and the Sig Ep national fraternity were mostly accomplished by mail. As work progressed, representatives from the national headquarters were sent to talk to the chapter. (Stotts 1952, pg 1) The Phi Delts had to meet very strict and prejudicial requirements in order to petition into Sigma Phi Epsilon. Obviously being a

product of its time, the Sigma Phi Epsilon Constitution stated in Article V, Sec. 2a that:

"Membership in Sigma Phi Epsilon is limited to white male residents of the United States or Canada, and no person shall become a member unless he be of Christian birth, of good reputation, and not a member of any other national Greek letter social fraternity." (Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, Inc. 1952, pg 1)

The Sigma Phi Epsilon national fraternity, recognizing the value of diversity and the need for reform, amended this clause in the early 1960's. In A Lifetime Responsibility to Brotherhood, the fraternity's philosophy of pluralism and tolerance states:

"America...must be redefined as a beautiful mosaic, not a melting pot. Sigma Phi Epsilon must continue to support right relationships, building community regardless of race, creed, religion, national orientation, or sexual orientation." (Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, Inc. 1991, pg 84)

The Phi Delts sent their formal petition to Sig Ep headquarters in October of 1952, with forty members signing it (See Appendix E). (Stotts 1952, pg 2) The chapter was formally accepted to become the Indiana Gamma chapter (the third chapter in Indiana, the 133rd chapter in the United States, See Appendix B) and the installation date was set for February 21, 1953. An entire weekend of events was planned centering around the installation. These events included the initiations into the fraternity, a banquet at the Student Center, a dance, and an all campus reception at the fraternity house (See Appendix F). (Indiana Gamma Chapter 1953)

Since its beginnings in 1948, the fraternity known as Zeta Chi, Phi Delta Pi, and now Sigma Phi Epsilon grew from the 16 men

in North Hall to tripling its membership at the house on Martin Street. The Sig Ep chapter had quickly becoming one of the strongest fraternities on campus, excelling in many different aspects of campus life. A new chapter filled with many great accomplishments had begun. Some of these accomplishments are listed in Appendix I.



## THE CHAPTER HOUSE OF INDIANA GAMMA

A fraternity house is the most visible sign of the organization on a university campus. It is the center of events for many of the undergraduate and alumni activities. A walk through the fraternity house can bring back many fond memories of years past to alumni. Dan Van Treese states:

"When those (people who remained independent) come back for homecoming where do they go? They can't visit their dorm room...We developed so many more friendships by living in the fraternity house." (Van Treese 1996)

Don Park adds:

"The house should be like a museum for the older members, because of the uniqueness of this kind of organization. It keeps moving on and continues to change, yet older alumni can come back and see old trophies and composites from their years as an undergraduate." (Park 1996)

The house remains a constant for everyone who associates themselves with this fraternity. Attitudes and personalities of the men may change over time, yet the connection to the fraternity is preserved by the physical structure of the house and the traditions and memories associated with it.

As previously discussed, the Phi Delts bought the house at 526 North Martin Street on December 8, 1952 before affiliating with Sigma Phi Epsilon. The house could hold up to twenty men and was the center for all the fraternity's activities. (Stotts 1952, pg 1) There was little room for the men to leave messes in a small house with twenty men living in it. Don Pauley recalls one brother standing up during a chapter meeting and saying,

"Whoever is squeezing their pimples and blackheads on the mirror in the bathroom, would you kindly stop." (Pauley 1996)

Any small complication could easily grow into massive problem. The men of Indiana Alpha chapter at Purdue University decided to make the lives of the Ball State Sig Eps a little more miserable by crippling the entire house. Some Ball State Sig Eps had stolen all the Purdue chapter's trophies as a prank, so the pledges were placed on guard duty for two weeks waiting for a retaliation from the Purdue chapter. Eventually, the Ball State chapter forgot about their prank and let down its guard. When the entire chapter had left the house to participate in a campus activity, the men from Purdue struck back. (Cook 1996) According to Ned Yaney, when they returned to their house and found themselves without telephone diaphragms, toilet balls, fuses, etc., they "drove to Lafayette with a keg of beer to get our essential items back, just to get the house going again." (Yaney 1996)

With the chapter growing at a rapid rate, it was time to buy a larger house. After some negotiations, the chapter purchased a new home at 1431 West Riverside Ave in 1955. (Pauley 1996) This new home could hold forty men, most of whom slept in a cold dorm in the garage. The beds were stacked three high, sleeping thirty-four men. The cold dorm was never heated, so members would sleep in sweats and wool socks with at least three or four blankets pulled over their heads. The house also included an officer's suite, where the six executive officers lived. (Scagnoli 1996)

Many times pledges were used as alarm clocks for actives sleeping in the cold dorms. Every night a pledge would serve "wake-up" duty. There would be a sign with the times and how the active would like to be woken up. "Shake" was just a slight shove until the active mumbled to the pledge to leave him alone. "Wake Up" meant that the pledge had to make sure that the active was sitting up and coherent. In the extreme case when an active absolutely had to get up at a certain time he would request "Drag". This meant that the pledge would literally pull the active out of bed hitting the floor. (Quick 1996)

The chapter house was unquestionably the heart of the organization, even more so than today. During this time period, female students had to be back in their dorms by 10:30 p.m. each night. Since the members could not be with their girlfriends, at 10:45 the house would contain upwards of sixty brothers gathering together. From there they might study, go to a bar, talk in the lounge, play cards, or watch television. (Park 1996; Shipley 1996)

A tradition started in 1956 at Indiana Gamma was that of having a housemother. These women were usually retired Muncie residents with no living relatives. The first house mom was Mary Hunt who served from 1956 to 1963. After her death, the formal lounge in the newly renovated house was dedicated to Mary Hunt in recognition of her years of service. (Gillespie 1996)

Lucille Roe was house mom for only one year, and in 1964 Martha Kinder became the new housemother. Martha Kinder was the first house mom to live in the house. Until Mom Kinder moved

into the house, men from the chapter would drive and pick the house mom up from her home and she would stay at the fraternity house from around 10 a.m. to sometime in the evening after dinner. When she died on June 9, 1983, longtime cook, Betty "Woo Babe" Woods stepped into her position. The house mother's suite, where Mom Kinder lived for nearly twenty years, was dedicated in her memory with a plaque and a portrait painted by undergraduate member Frank Locklear (who is the uncle of television and movie actress Heather Locklear). When Mom Woods died in July of 1985, Margaret "Madge" Foster was chosen by the undergraduate chapter to become the new house mother in 1986. (Gillespie 1996)

The role of the housemother had many different facets. They had to advise the undergraduate officers if problems arose with the kitchen and meal planning, chaperon events when females were invited, counsel members when they wanted to talk to her about problems, and have the ability to put up with the day to day living habits of fraternity men. (McFarland 1966; Gillespie 1996) Things such as living above the house juke box and listening to music at 2 or 3 a.m. may have been part of the reason that Lucille Roe only lasted a year as house mom. (Gillespie 1996)

Within seven years the chapter had outgrown the house, so an expansion and house development committee was established to develop to begin plans for improving the house. The expansion committee submitted its ideas, sketches, and floor plans to the alumni board on February 1, 1960. (Indiana Gamma Alumni Board Feb. 1960, pg 1) The committee's plans included an estimated \$75,000 addition and a \$30,000 renovation of the house. (Darby

1962) The new addition and renovation would allow the house to accommodate sixty-five men sleeping in cold dorms, with twelve 3-4 man study rooms. Other rooms to be added were a housemother's suite, library, television room, exercise room, and an acoustically tiled room to practice music. (Ball State News Jan. 15, 1963, pg 1)

This would be the first and the largest expansion project for a fraternity house at Ball State. (Scagnoli 1996) Work began in the summer of 1963, however, due to some delays getting building permits, members returning to school in the fall were left without a place to live. Nearly forty members moved into the top floor of the Delaware Hotel in downtown Muncie and lived there until construction was completed. Members were allowed to move into the finished house during January of 1964. (Van Treese 1996; Gillespie 1996)

The expansion allowed for meals to be served for the entire fraternity every night. Joseph Scagnoli describes the formal dinners:

"Mom Hunt would sit at the head table with the officers, and two pledges were required to eat dinner at each table with the actives. Once a week a senior would teach the pledges proper table etiquette for a formal dinner. Everyone had to wear a tie and jacket, but they could wear jeans and tennis shoes if they wanted."

Some of the best times in the fraternity were spent at dinner. Once a year the active members would have "Skag Night", which consisted of a large food fight. The pledges would then clean up the mess and redecorate the room. Dan Van Treese recalls:

The only people who knew when "Skag Night" was going to occur were the executive officers. They would politely tell Mom Kinder to leave and she would pretend to answer the phone. Once she was gone, everyone would begin to throw their food. I have a scar from a hot baked potato landed on my arm and burned it...These only happened once a year, with only one exception. One year Paul Gallo was so mad that he missed the food fight that he started another one the very next day." (Van Treese 1996)

On March 24, 1967, Dr. James Albertson died in a plane crash in South Vietnam while heading up a study of higher education. Dr. Albertson was a Sig Ep at Colorado State College and chapter counselor for Indiana Gamma between 1956-1962. He was the first executive assistant to Dr. Emens at Ball State Teachers College. He later became president of Wisconsin State University at Stevens Point. (The Pointer 1967, pg 1, Specht 1969, pg 20-21) To honor his memory, the brothers of Indiana Gamma dedicated the new library with a plaque bearing his picture and memorial.

After nearly thirty years of use and abuse, the house was in desperate need of another renovation. Many alumni would become depressed just by visiting the house and seeing the shape that it was in. Don Pauley remembers how bad the house smelled when he would drop off his son, Jay, at the house. (Pauley 1996) In a letter written by Bob Rice and Lewis Gillespie on December 22, 1971, the less than favorable conditions of the house were described to the entire fraternity.

"The condition of the kitchen was complete filth. The refrigerator had open food in containers,...cheese and eggs were crusted on the floor...In the basement, trash was stored behind the old boiler. Old shower room or now pledge room completely filthy full of chicken bones, food, rubbish, turpentine, quite conducive to rats, rodents...Upstairs hole

completely filthy-trash-two mattresses-an electric heater with two bare wires...These observations should be summed up in the following statement; the house is almost as dirty as when the professional cleaning firm arrived in August. It would seem that a new freshman would not want to move into the house with the dirty conditions existing the way they are...It is a shame that we have a \$300,000 house in such a state of filth." (Gillespie & Rice 1971)

Discussion about a renovation began during 1991. It was an uphill battle for those alumni who wanted the house renovated. According to Dan Van Treese, chapter advisor:

"There were at least two members of the alumni board who felt that we would be wasting our money on renovating the house. They believed that the undergraduate members would continue to destroy the house, punching holes in the walls, etc. It was getting so bad that if the Health Department were to come out and inspect the house they would probably condemn the property. We created a committee who presented what they thought should be done to the house. I encouraged them to stay for the alumni board meeting, knowing that every alum there had a vote. I basically stacked the vote in favor of the renovation, but I had to do what I thought was best for the house." (Van Treese 1996)

The renovation was spearheaded by Steve Roe, an alum who graduated in 1973. He personally contracted out all the work for the renovation. Work began in 1991 and was soon completed in the spring of 1992. (Van Treese 1996) Some of the major changes included: changing the kitchen into a self-service facility where members could cook for themselves, moving the t.v. lounge from the downstairs to what used to be the dining room of the house, and creating a pool room in the old t.v. lounge. (Indiana Gamma Alumni Board Spring 1992 pg 1-4)

A Re-dedication ceremony was set for the following Homecoming as a means to bring back a large number of alumni to

see the newly renovated house. During the informal ceremony, alumni and undergraduates described their fondest memories of their years in the fraternity. The event culminated when Dan Van Treese unveiled the newly framed Charter (see Appendix B). According to Van Treese, the Charter was stolen by an undergraduate member during the 70's who believed that the fraternity did not deserve to have the document. When that unknown member heard news of the 1992 house cleaning and the positive direction the fraternity was now taking, he mailed the Charter to the Sig Ep national headquarters with the instructions to send it to the chapter. When Van Treese obtained the tattered piece of sheep-skin, he framed it and presented it with much joy to the chapter. (Van Treese 1996)

The house is always changing and improving to meet the needs of the undergraduate members. The Clifford T. Loder Memorial Library was completed and dedicated on March 16, 1996. The attic of the old part of the house, commonly referred to as "the hole", was completely renovated. Fans and florescent lights were installed, and the library was furnished with new desks, a conference table, and a multi-media computer. In the near future, the chapter plans to have at least three computers directly linked to Ball State's vax system. (Van Treese 1996)

A large group of alumni and undergraduate members attended the dedication ceremony. Loder's surviving family, wife Carol and son T.C., were flown from Florida to attend the ceremony also. The ceremony was informal and the seriousness was tempered with humorous memories of Cliff, who died of a heart attack in



1981. Stories were told about the hard work and dedication that Cliff put into the fraternity as house manager. According to Dan Van Treese, "Cliff was one of those brothers that you would look at and say, 'If we were all like that this fraternity would be even greater than it is now.'" (Van Treese 1996)

As the fraternity ventures into the Twenty-first Century, the Sigma Phi Epsilon national fraternity has created the "SigEp-Net". The SigEp-Net is a collection of email forums and World Wide Web pages. The email forums allow Sig Eps to interact with other members to discuss current events within the fraternity, Balanced Man Project implementation, as well as private forums for chapter presidents and resident scholars. The national fraternity homepage allows the entire cyberspace community to access information from the headquarters and individual chapter homepages. This site can be accessed directly at <http://www.sigep.org/> (Maddox 1996, pg 3)

Indiana Gamma Chapter has initiated construction of a new home on the World Wide Web. Undergraduate computer science major Louis Lowe is designing the chapter's own homepage. It will eventually have personal information about the undergraduate chapter, local and national fraternity history, as well as pictures of the chapter house and membership. From this site a connection can be made to the homepages of the national fraternity, Ball State University, and the Muncie community. This site can be reached at [www.cs.bsu.edu/homepages/louman/sigep/](http://www.cs.bsu.edu/homepages/louman/sigep/) (Lowe 1996)

## RUSH AND PLEDGESHIP

When mentioning fraternities, the first thing that comes to mind is how does one become a member. This initial period of one's life in the fraternity can provide his most cherished memories of the chapter. Pledgeship can have many positive benefits to the new members going through it; however, over the years, hazing activities reached a point where there was very little control over the pledge events and pledgeship became detrimental to the new members. Before the period of pledgeship could be experienced, a new member had to become accepted through the process called fraternity rush.

From the beginning, Indiana Gamma prided itself in the diversity of its membership. When Zeta Chi began to recruit men into their fraternity, they set very specific standards. According to Dale Kendrick:

"Those of us who started Zeta Chi felt that no more than three persons in any particular 'field of interest or major' should be pledged, that we wanted a wide range of different men interested in different activities...There was no doubt that we hoped to be much richer in this fraternity makeup...We looked for talented and creative men from a wide variety of campus interests." (Kendrick 1996)

The diversity of the membership was cultivated by the chapter through its recruitment tactics and perpetuated by campus involvement. David Beer states:

"Diversity was the key to our success. We had jocks, music majors, art majors, industrial management majors, etc. In this way, all contributed a talent in a multitude of ways...We has brothers in every major campus activity so this gave us a good rushing edge. Having a tiny house on

Martin Street was not a deterrent to wanting to be a Sig Ep." (Beer 1996)

Much of the recruitment process happens outside of the designated rush period. Most men have a good idea what fraternity they would like to join before they attend their first rush event. Lewis Gillespie recalls:

"When I would go to high school basketball games in Portland, Indiana, all the college guys would come home with these black jackets with the skull and crossbones on them. A lot of guys in my pledge class were from my hometown." (Gillespie 1996)

During the early years of the fraternity, sophomore members were required to live in the residence halls so they could scout out good rush prospects. (Park 1996) The members' attitudes also played a role on making a good impression on those who had no prior connection to Indiana Gamma. Chris Muckridge states:

"I was impressed by the informality of the house. The people were laid back, not caught up with outward impressions. The size of the house and the diversity of the membership was also impressive." (Muckridge 1996)

Rush had a very formal structure during the 50's through the 70's. Rushees were invited to recruitment parties called "smokers". These parties could take place anywhere from the fraternity house to the Hotel Roberts or Ball State's Practical Arts Building. At these events, the rushees were given food, entertained by the singing of active brothers, and discussed the fraternity. (Gillespie 1996)

After the first round of smokers, the fraternities would make a list of people that they wanted to take a closer look at,

and another round of focused smokers were held. At these cut meetings, or "ball sessions", slides of all the rushees were shown on a screen and actives would speak about each individual and how well he would fit into the chapter. The members would vote by dropping either a white or black marble into a jar. Depending on the number of black marbles, the member was either accepted into the organization or "black balled" out of further consideration. (Quick 1996)

After this round, final cuts were decided and the bids were sent through the university and distributed to all the rushees. The bidden rushees decided which house they wanted to join, and reported to that house by 7:00 that evening. Each house would show off their new pledge class by taking them to the Student Center. (Park 1996)

In recent years, rush has become much more informal. Rush lasts one and a half to two weeks, with events almost every night at the house. After three to four open rush activities, the fraternity would have special events by invitation only so that the active brothers could get to know the rushees more personally. As the actives felt comfortable about asking a prospective member to join, they would extend him a bid at any time during the two weeks. If the rushee were to accept the bid, he would return to the house at the end of rush for the pinning ceremony. (Harris, C. 1996)

From the mid 70's to the mid 80's, rush parties had more emphasis on "party" than rush. According to Ramon Avila, "Rush was how many kegs you could throw out...people would join

whatever house had the most kegs." All the fraternities were running rush in this fashion, mainly because the university paid little attention to what the fraternities were doing. (Avila 1996) It was not until the 1982 that alcohol was partially banned at fraternity rush. During this time, the first part of rush was dry and the rushees got to know the actives, then Thursday through Saturday the Sig Eps would have parties that were invite only. (Ward, D. 1996) The Interfraternity council voted to eliminate alcohol from rush in the fall of 1985. (Donaldson 1985)

Pledgeship started immediately after the pinning ceremony. The pledgeship period lasted anywhere from four to twelve weeks. During this period the actives would try to instill respect for the fraternity and the active membership, as well as a strong unity between the members of the pledge class. The pledge class would be assigned several projects aimed at developing the pledges organizational skills. There would be pledge meetings once a week, study tables three nights a week, house duties every day, and line-ups every two or three weeks. (Park 1996)

During a line up, the pledges would stand in a line and interlock arms. The active membership would proceed yell at the pledges, quizzing them over their pledge book material, scaring one to take pledgeship seriously. (Lemieux 1996; Harris, C. 1996)

During a line up, a pledges big bro might hold up the fraternity active badge or his black Sig Ep jacket and ask his little bro if he would like to wear it. The correct answer would be to say, "I'm not worthy to wear that yet, sir." The guys who

actually reached for the pin or jacket would be yelled at by the entire chapter. (Gillespie 1996)

It was required that pledges do a variety of little activities. They could only enter the house through the basement. When they would go up or down stairs they would scream the number of each step they were taking. While they were in the house, the pledges could only face east, even if it meant walking backwards or climbing the stairs sideways. (Muckridge 1996)

During the mid 50's to 1969, the first thing a pledge would be given was a white golf-style hat, called a "beanie", and a piece of black felt to cut out the greek letters Sigma, Phi, Epsilon, and a heart. They had to sew the pieces onto their hats by the next day. Most guys would take their hats to girls in the residence halls to be sewn. (Gillespie 1996)

A long standing tradition at Indiana Gamma was require the pledges to carry a pledge book. In this book, the pledges had all the information that they were to memorize and recite. This information included the names, hometowns and majors of all the active brothers, local and national history of the fraternity, greek alphabet, and songs. The pledges would have to interview every active brother in order to get his personal information and his signature. The active brother would usually quiz the pledge over everything else in the book, and if the pledge failed to answer every question correctly he would not get the signature. To many alumni, the pledge book is one of their fondest mementos of their fraternity experiences. (Harris, C. 1996; McQuinn 1996)

Pledges would also have to be at the house every morning to raise the flag and sing the fraternity anthem at 8:00 a.m. If the pledges were late or did not know how to sing, the time was pushed back a half hour. By the time flag raising started at 6:00 the pledges made sure everyone got it right. (Ward, D. 1996)

Another common activity for pledges was a walkout. A walkout gave pledges the opportunity to get away from Ball State for two to three days and visit another Sig Ep chapter. Before leaving, the pledges would play a number of good-natured pranks on the active chapter as retribution for weeks of harassment. The actives would often try to discover when the pledges would hold their walkout to counter act any intended pranks. According to Roger Holder:

"As one of the kitchen stewards, I helped the pledges set all the clocks ahead four hours. The pledges preceded to wake everyone up and I began cooking breakfast. Brothers who had returned from the bars at 3 a.m. only received an hours night sleep...During another pledge class walkout, the actives caught Ed Burke and tied him to a chair. They tortured him by putting ice in his shorts until he told the actives when the pledge walkout was." (Holder 1996)

The history of alcohol abuse and walkouts have caused problems for the chapter. While most walkouts were a positive experience for both the pledge class and the chapters that they visited, certain exceptions have created bad feeling between Indiana Gamma and other Sig Ep chapters. On a walkout to the University of Michigan (Michigan Alpha) during March of 1973, the members of the Indiana Gamma pledge class staged a destructive walkout that caused \$135 worth of damage to pool table, carpet,

phones, and food supplies of that chapter. In a letter written to the Indiana Gamma President, Gregroy Stout, Michigan Alpha's house manager, wrote:

"The conduct displayed by these people could not have been better than despicable. The term "animals" perhaps better describes the actions of the pack that descended on our house. To me an animal is a creature which makes filth and does not bother to clean it up...I truly wish that I could conclude this letter by saying 'Fraternally yours,' but I find that I cannot." (Stout 1973)

The damages incurred at the Michigan walkout were only financial, however on a walkout to the University of Wisconsin (Wisconsin Beta) the consequences could have been more drastic. Before the pledges left for their walkout on March 30, 1990, they captured an active and served him an excessive amount of alcohol. The pledges dropped the active off in the front yard of the chapter house before leaving for Wisconsin. The active was later taken to Ball Memorial Hospital because of a high blood alcohol content. While at Wisconsin, the pledge class, along with a group of active members, proceeded to cause property damages to Wisconsin Beta's chapter house and the surrounding fraternity houses. (Indiana Gamma Standards Board 1990; Harris, C. 1996)

The university was quick to suspend the chapter from any fraternal and campus events. The chapter punished the pledges and active members through a standards board investigation. The chapter decided to de-pledge the entire twelve man pledge class from the fraternity and inflicted various penalties upon the



active members according to their involvement in the walkout.

(Indiana Gamma Standards Board 1990; Harris, R. 1990)

The end of pledgeship was marked by "Hell Week". The pledges were required to stay at the house the entire week, and they were only allowed to leave the house to go to class. A room in the basement was designated a safe zone for the pledges. Needless to say, grades suffered heavily from Hell Week. (Quick 1996)

Hell Week was marked by an increase in activities for the pledges. During the 50's to the early 70's, pledges would have to wear underwear made of burlap, carry a raw egg in their jockstrap, and they would have to carry bushel baskets with favors for the actives. These favors would include an up-to-date listing of movies playing in the theaters, candy, cigarettes, and a gig book. The gig book listed each complaint that an active had about that pledge. (Cook 1996)

Another example of the pledge's requirements was to serve guard duty in front of the red door. Carrying a broom like a rifle, he would march back and forth like a soldier until his shift was up. Whenever a member of another fraternity would walk by the house, the pledge would chase after him pointing the broom and shouting, "Bang! Bang! You're dead you weasel!" (Quick 1996)

Each night of Hell Week was designated by which class would be running the ceremony and other activities. Sophomore night was always the worst because they had just finished pledgeship themselves and were very eager to haze the younger guys. Senior

night was usually a party to promote brotherhood and celebrate the end of the week. (Quick 1996)

Sophomores usually set up the "Fireman" activity. The members would build a fire in the alley behind the fraternity house and fill a large tub with a mixture of whatever they could find: gravy, hot peppers, dead rodents, etc. The pledges would then have to take a mouth full of this concoction and run through the house to spit it on the fire. Along the way, however, actives would stop the pledges and make them do push-ups with their mouths filled with the mixture. The night ended once the fire was put out. (Cook 1996; Gillespie 1996; Van Treese 1996)

The end of Hell Week marks the conclusion of pledgship and all hazing activities. There are differing opinions about the value and usefulness of a pledgship that involves hazing. The men who formed Zeta Chi did want to experience hazing in order to join a fraternity. (Hofmann 1996; Mathews 1996; Mallas 1996) As early as the mid-50's however, hazing was used as a method to promote teamwork and respect amongst the new members. Ed Shipley states:

"Hazing is the reason that the fraternity had a strong brotherhood. It made people stronger. I learned a lot of personal information about the actives and we had pledge beanies, for which I was proud to wear. (Shipley 1996)

Greg Schenkel adds:

"Pledgship was good because it taught us to stick together. It instilled discipline, values, and time management skills. I became a better person for going through [pledgship]." (Schenkel 1996)

Other alumni disagree with the value of the hazing aspect of pledgeship. According to Ramon Avila:

"Pledgeship was a disgrace. It was horrible, destructive, degrading, dehumanizing...Sig Eps were not even the worst...Out of a pledge class of twenty-six men, only seven did not flunk out." (Avila 1996)

Rich Harris, an undergraduate member at the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point and Indiana Gamma chapter counselor from 1981-1991, felt that the majority of his time was spent dealing with problems. He adds:

"Students were wasting about a year of their college career. Fraternities were destructive to people. Once you went through pledgeship, people felt that they had to participate in every party and every hazing activity to prove themselves to the rest of the chapter...The chapter would loose about half of every pledge class due to people quitting and grades." (Harris, R. 1996)

Some alumni understand the problems with pledgeship, but they do not wish to ignore the value of the respect and teamwork that hazing fostered. Dan Van Treese states:

"Pledgeships were tough back then, but even the crazy stuff had a purpose to bring the guys together and becoming a team, people felt that they really achieved something when they went active...[Getting rid of hazing] is like throwing the baby out with the bath water." (Van Treese 1996)

Don Park adds:

"Pledgeship was miserable, but now you can laugh about what happened...When you went active you felt great to finally be a part of the organization...I always liked the twelve week pledgeship and some of the things that you got out of it, except the people who thought that 'I went

through a tough pledgeship so those guys are going to go through a tougher one'." (Park 1996)

Alumni have also realized that the pledgeship has changed drastically since graduating from Ball State. Changes in university and national fraternity policy have become committed to an anti-hazing policy. John Skelton asks the alumni membership:

"When you were here...did the University have two grade requirements--one for independents and one for fraternities? ...were house duties considered hazing?...A lot of the things that aren't around anymore were mandated out by [Ball State University, the national fraternity, and state and federal laws]." (Indiana Gamma Alumni Board Spring 1990, pg 1)

Sigma Phi Epsilon national fraternity and Ball State University's are both strongly opposed to any type of hazing activity. As stated in Article 1, Section 4, of Sigma Phi Epsilon's Grand Chapter Bylaws:

"Any pre-initiation activity shall be of a constructive nature in accordance with the purposes and objectives of the Fraternity, and all forms of hazing and those activities commonly associated with 'hell week' are prohibited" (Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, Inc. 1991, pg 142)

Ball State's definition of hazing states:

"Hazing, which conflicts with the rules and regulations of the university, the national fraternity and various state laws, is defined as any action taken or situation created intentionally to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment or ridicule. This includes wearing apparel which is conspicuous and not normally in good taste, engaging in public stunts and general buffoonery and that which is specifically prohibited by the

Interfraternity Council." (Ball State University et. al., Anti-hazing form)

The national fraternity headquarters has taken a very strong stance against chapters that continue to haze, even suspending the original Sig Ep chapter at Richmond, Virginia (Virginia Alpha) for hazing violations. (Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, Inc. 1996, pg 8)

The Indiana Gamma chapter has followed a strict non-hazing policy since 1992. The risk management and hazing violations incurred by the fraternity during the spring of that year nearly led to the expulsion of the Indiana Gamma chapter from Ball State University. The chapter has implemented the Balanced Man Project to help change the focus of the membership development program. (Harris, C. 1996) Both of these topics will be discussed in the following sections.

## THE SPRING OF 1992

On March 22, 1992, the Indiana Gamma chapter suffered its greatest set back of its more than forty year history. When it was reported to Ball State University that the active members of Sigma Phi Epsilon violated several of the university risk management policies, including providing a common source of alcohol, underage drinking, and hazing, at the annual "Bones Banquet" party, the university and the national fraternity stepped in to fix the problems of the chapter. Their actions led to the suspension of eighty-five of the one hundred and fifteen members. Of the thirty that chose to stay and rebuild the chapter, ten graduated that spring, leaving only twenty men at Indiana Gamma at the beginning of the fall semester. (Ball State University 1992, pg 346; Mikesell 1992; Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, Inc. 1992)

The spring of 1992 was only the climax of nearly twenty years of increasing problems and lack of internal controls that progressed, compromising Indiana Gamma's existence at Ball State. The Bones Banquet incident was the excuse for the university and the national fraternity to step in and fix the problem. It was a period of time marred by hazing, drug and alcohol abuse, sexual assault issues, and vandalism within and outside of the chapter house. (Harris, R. 1996)

In his essay "What Has Happened to Indiana Gamma and the Rest of the Greek System?", Dan Van Treese sums up the problems that grown out of control during the last twenty to twenty-five years:

"[Undergraduates were allowed] to possess and use alcoholic beverages in the fraternity houses...Due to the foolish excesses of the old pledgeships which led to serious injuries and even fatalities to pledges and others, strict non-hazing regulations were enacted. The positive aspects of the old tough pledge programs were thrown out along with the negative aspects...Fraternities lost the ability to police or regulate themselves." (Van Treese 1992, pg 2-3)

In a report of Sigma Phi Epsilon campus difficulties from 1970 to 1978, included numerous noise complaints, acts of disorderly conduct, alcohol and drug abuse, fights, and property damage. Some examples listed by the report included:

May 5, 1972 - Fire Department called to extinguish bonfire set by members of Sigma Phi Epsilon, after being advised by Fire Dept. that this was unlawful. Several members attempted to keep firemen from the fire by throwing beer cans at them.

April 3, 1974 - Students from 1515 Riverside took a lighted sign from the Sigma Kappa Sorority suite. Girls who tried to stop them were shoved away.

October 11, 1978 - At approximately 3:00 a.m., the white cross in front of the Sigma Chi House was soaked with a flammable liquid and set a-fire. could have burned one of the 50 foot pine trees close by. Also paint was thrown on front entrance to house. Five members of the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity were seen driving away from the scene. All were called before the University Board of Review on December 18, 1978. (Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity Inc. 1979, pg 1-5)

The Interfraternity council had tried on many occasions to help the fraternity stay out of trouble. The IFC executive board studied the Indiana Gamma chapter, identified problems and made suggestions on how to correct them. The IFC executive board pointed out that because of the fraternity's location close to campus, the number of "little sisters" living in the residence halls across the street, and the past reputation of the house

made Sigma Phi Epsilon an easy target for hall directors and campus police. The IFC executive board recommended that the chapter eliminate pledge class walkouts, exert stronger internal control through increased penalties for violating chapter policies, and suggested meeting with the IFC executive board to monitor Indiana Gamma's progress. (Goodwin 1979) Looking back, this effort by the IFC executive board helped to control the chapter's current problems, but it had little long term effects on changing the chapter's behavior.

The lack of internal control to monitor the behavior of members has its roots in the secrecy surrounding the fraternity lifestyle. According to Dale Kendrick:

"Most of the rules that were broken were done secretly and within the secrecy of "groups". What THEY did not know was good for us. It was like having a "fox hole" mentality- what happened there and then was our business and no one else's. It was fun being ornery and keeping it a secret. Nothing was worse than being a blabber mouth, someone who squealed, etc..." (Kendrick 1996)

Being a good brother meant lying for your brothers and protecting them at all costs from anyone outside of the fraternity. Rich Harris states:

"If [the members of the chapter] got caught from the outside than the members would say, 'O.K., we will pay our penalty, but we would never do anything to ourselves or our members because that is not a fraternity'." (Harris, R. 1996)

Alcohol and drug abuse were also factors attributing to the problems of the fraternity membership. In the early days of the



fraternity, alcohol was not allowed on chapter property. This policy changed in the 60's. According to David Beer:

"In the mid 60's, a number of alumni made many trips to Muncie to attempt a re-organization of the newly remodeled chapter house. For some reason that bunch thought they were in a luxury hotel where rules and management policy just did not need to exist. To me, this philosophy started the chapter on a downward trend and other fraternities took the campus reins leaving Sigma Phi Epsilon in the distance."  
(Beer 1996)

The chapter's executive board would do little to punish those members who abused alcohol and drugs. According to Allen Smith, a 1987 graduate:

"Anybody caught doing drugs in the house was supposed to be fined \$50. The people in charge, however, were also doing drugs, so no one was ever forced to pay." (Smith 1996)

As chapter counselor, Rich Harris had to sign papers for the national fraternity stating that there were no drugs in the chapter house. When he would ask the chapter about it, the officers would lie to him to cover up their problems. During the summer of 1975, some rooms of the house were being rented to some non-members who were caught growing and selling marijuana from the chapter house. Members would also be subjected to random drug searches with drug-sniffing dogs. (Harris, R. 1996)

The chapter began to create more apathy than brotherhood. Alumni who would visit the chapter house would leave feeling depressed and discouraged with the condition of the chapter house. (Quick 1996; Scagnoli 1996) The house lost the diversity